

a groove on said hood extending towards the document feed path opening of the dispensing device for guiding printed documents dispensed from the dispensing device through said means for covering at least the document feed path opening and into said means for providing access]

C1
(concluded)
an upper portion extending over the document feed path opening to prevent contamination of the document feed path opening by airborne particles; and

an access opening on said hood spaced from the document feed path opening to allow documents to provide access to documents received from the dispensing device.

C2
6.(amended) The protective device of claim 1 wherein said [means for guiding the dispensed document] hood also includes:

an angled top portion.

C3
21. (new) The protective device of claim 1 wherein hood includes:

a groove extending towards the document feed path opening of the dispensing device to guide the produced document.

Remarks

The above amendment to the claims is being submitted prior to examination under the continued prosecution procedure under 37 CFR 1.52(d). Claims 1 – 4, 6, 8 – 16, and 18 – 21 are now pending.

The earlier filed claims had previously been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over each of the patents to Frick and Otsubo. Frick discloses a noise-reducing cover for printers and other machines. The cover of Frick is solely intended to reduce noise, not to protect the printer from contamination from airborne particles. The cover includes a slot 11 in the lid 8 that allows paper from the printer to pass through the lid. The slot 11 appears to be directly over the document feed path, not spaced from it. The cover of Otsubo includes a packing case with soundproofing qualities. A perforation 3 is created to allow the printer to be observed. Paper is apparently feed out a slot extending in the rear of the case. This slot extends directly opposite of the document feed path.

Claim 1, as presently pending, includes limitations of a hood having an upper portion that *extends over* the document feed path *opening to minimize contamination from airborne particles* and of an access opening in the hood *spaced from the document feed path opening*.


Neither Frick or Otsubo disclose or teach either of these limitations. The covers of both of these references include "access openings" directly over the document feed path opening. Printers used with the devices disclosed in both of these references would be susceptible to the document feed paths suffering from contamination from airborne particles, such as oil or grease. Neither of these references are intended to prevent contamination from airborne particles, but instead are concerned with sound proofing. Thus, neither of these references, taken either individually or in combination, disclose these important limitations nor would it have been obvious to add these limitations to either reference or the combination of the two. Claims 1 – 4, 6, 8 – 10, and 21 include these important limitations.

Claims 11 – 16 and 18 – 20 have previously been indicated as allowable.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if further discussion would advance the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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